



Greetings FHI Stakeholders!

See below for updates, announcements, and save the dates from the Family Homelessness Initiative.

INITIATIVE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

FHI ADVISORY GROUP UPDATE:

The Family Homelessness Initiative Advisory Group (AG) met March 11. The meeting objectives were:

Discuss and provide input on the FHI Work Plan (and the role of the FHI Advisory Group)

- The AG discussed the key milestones for the next 18 months, including ongoing review of system performance progress; coordinated entry redesign; system realignment; Family Homelessness Strategic Plan 'refresh'; ongoing tracking of new strategies/pilots; and future Washington Families Fund System Innovation Grant projects.

Discuss and give input on Washington Families Fund System Innovation Grant (SIG) proposal concepts to explore

- The AG discussed potential proposal concepts given the funding priorities established by Building Changes and our local CEH priorities. The group discussed where there are gaps and opportunities, as well as what is needed to support the system transformation work. Initial ideas discussed included: increasing/expanding employment opportunities; supporting vulnerable families disproportionately impacted by homelessness; and capacity building for providers (training, supports, etc.).

Understand System Realignment progress to date and next steps

- Several members of the AG that are participating in the first phase of realignment (providers and funders) shared their experience on the process to date, including lessons learned and challenges. See realignment update attachment for additional information.

Update on Coordinated Entry system redesign

- The AG was provided an update on FHC's implementation efforts on some of the Early Action items. In addition, they were provided an update on the coordinated entry redesign and a short recap of the March Interagency Council meeting.

The FHI Advisory Group meets every other month (next meeting is in May). *Past agendas and meeting summaries can be found on the FHI website.*

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES - NEWS & UPDATES:

Coordinated Entry System – Progress on System Redesign

As we mentioned last month, the IAC affirmed a new vision for aligned coordinated entry that provides clear and sufficient oversight for performance of a coordinated system for all populations experiencing homelessness. This vision (attached) supports the recommendations from Katharine Gale's report. While the planning work at the systems level is ongoing, Family Housing Connection (FHC) has implemented new practices and policies to address some of the recommendations presented to the IAC, which will result in improved assessment capacity as well as improved coordinated entry experience for families and providers.

These improvements include:

- Domestic violence & FUP Vouchers granted temporary waiver to opt out of FHC
- FHC implemented new Block Scheduling for assessment appointments, which is estimated to yield up **100 additional appointments per month**
- FHC began running a WATCH background check for families at initial assessment (if the family chooses) which will **allow families to gain a better understanding of what is on their background** and to resolve any issues or address discrepancies prior to being referred to housing

- An “After-hours” External Fill Policy for congregate shelter was implemented on March 20, which will **allow congregate shelters to fill any open bed after hours** if FHC is not able to find a family to refer during business hours.

Other upcoming milestones/next steps:

- CCS will continue to operate FHC through the end of 2015 while we develop and transition to a new system for assessments, referrals, and CEA oversight in 2016.
- CEH staff and FHC funders are continuing to develop a proposed model for decentralized assessments, which will propose regionally based housing crisis resolution centers via community-based “hubs”.
- A small workgroup will review options for a new assessment tool and recommend an explicit prioritization policy for the family system.

Visit the FHI website to see materials related to the system redesign, including projected timeline and quarterly process/policy changes. Click on the following link ([Final Report](#)) to review the report.

If you have any questions about the process, please feel to contact Michelle Valdez at michelle.valdez@cehkc.org

System Realignment Work

Please see the attached System Realignment Update shared with the Inter-Agency Council and FHI Advisory Group. As noted in the update, we will begin efforts to identify the next group of agencies to undertake realignment in this next quarter. Additional background about system realignment can be found on our website at www.kingcounty.gov/familyhomelessness. If you have questions or would like to discuss realignment options for any of your time-limited programs, please contact Triina Tennelo at triina.tennelo@cehkc.org.

Systems Innovation Grants (SIG)

Shelter to Housing Project

Last month, local shelter providers and other stakeholders heard from several providers implementing the Diversion for families pilot. These providers shared some of the highlights of their work, including strategies they use to engage families to explore solutions identified to resolve their episode of homelessness. This month, we also learned that King County is able to build capacity in this project by providing additional funds to shelter providers. A King County representative attended the March Implementation check-in to provide additional information. Shelter to Housing Project Guidelines can be found on the FHI [website](#).

The next implementation check-in:

April 28, 2015 | 9:30 – 11:00am | 2100 Building – 2100 24th Ave. S, Seattle

If you participate in the Shelter to Housing Project, please send agenda items/requests to triina.tennelo@cehkc.org.

Risk Mitigation Funds

The Risk Mitigation Funds (RMF) project launched this month. RMF are flexible funds to assist in offsetting any unanticipated costs associated with damages and losses to transitional housing projects that reduce their screening criteria to an established threshold. This includes transitional housing projects undertaking realignment. The funders involved in supporting this project will be reviewing questions that were brought up during the launch meeting. Providers will receive further guidance via email.

RMF Guidelines and forms can be found on the FHI [website](#) and additional questions can be directed to triina.tennelo@cehkc.org.

OTHER NEWS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEWS & UPDATES:

Register Now for Seattle Housing Authority Section 8 Voucher Waitlist

The Seattle Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher "Section 8" program is holding an online-only lottery for spots on their new waitlist during a registration period lasting from March 23 at 8 am through April 10 at 5 pm (PDT). After registration closes, 2500 households will be randomly selected and placed on a new waitlist. This is the first time the waitlist has been open since February 2013.



Registration is free and only at seattlehousing.org/waitlist – any site asking for money is a scam. The safest way to register is to type "seattlehousing.org/waitlist" directly into the internet address bar

United Way of King County Announces 2015 Community Resource Exchange

On Thursday, April 23, United Way will host the 2015 Community Resource Exchange at Century Link Field from 9am to 2pm. The Community Resource Exchange is a day devoted to connecting people experiencing homelessness in King County with immediate access to the services and resources they need. In one place—on one day—attendees enjoy a hot meal and have access to free health services, haircuts, voicemail accounts, public benefits, referrals to employment training and much more. Last April, over 1500 community members experiencing homelessness came to the Community Resource Exchange for a day of hope and help. For more information, e-mail cre@uwkc.org.



The Moth "Home: Lost and Found" Showcases Local Homelessness Stories on April 28

On April 28 at Fremont Abbey the Moth will host "Home: Lost and Found," a showcase of local homelessness stories developed in their nationally recognized story telling workshop. Coordinated by Seattle University through funds from the Gates Foundation, "Home: Lost and Found" was created to develop the storytelling skills within family homelessness providers and advocacy organizations in the Puget Sound region. Learn more [here](#).

UPCOMING FUNDING OR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

Fair Housing 101 for Non-Profit Transitional & Shelter Housing Providers

Thursday, April 16, 1:00-3:00

Chinook Building, Room 121

401 Fifth Avenue, Seattle

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fair-housing-101-for-nonprofit-transitional-shelter-housing-providers-tickets-150558464>

29th Annual Western Washington Fair Housing Conference

Thursday, May 28

Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center

Online registration opens Monday, April 6

Early bird special: \$99 May 1st and after: \$129

More info: www.cityoftacoma.org/fairhousing (Click on link at left: Fair Housing Conference)

Questions? Call 253-591-5043

WHAT'S COMING NEXT FOR FHI

Monthly FHI Stakeholder Information Session

The Family Homelessness Initiative staff host monthly information sessions on the 3rd Wednesday of the month to talk with local stakeholders (providers and funders) about the work of the Initiative. This is an opportunity to

April 2015

hear about current projects, what is coming up next, and to ask questions and provide input. The FHC Feedback Meetings, which are an opportunity for service providers and partners to hear updates on new policies/procedures at FHC and to provide feedback, will directly follow the Info Session each month.

THE NEXT FHI INFO SESSION will be:

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

9:00-10:00am

(Immediately followed by the **FHC Feedback Meeting** from 10:00-11:00am)

Location: 2100 Building (2100 24th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98144)

Topic: Update on the coordinated entry system redesign

Contact Triina Tennelo at triina.tennelo@kingcounty.gov or visit the Initiative website for more information on the Info Session or Yasin Darmulo at yasind@ccsww.org for more information on the FHC Feedback Meetings.

CONTACT US

If you have questions about any of the above updates, or if you would like us to share any announcements, opportunities, or items on your behalf in future monthly emails, you can contact Michelle Valdez at michelle.valdez@cehkc.org.

Please feel free to contact any FHI staff member for more information or technical assistance:

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Triina Tennelo, triina.tennelo@cehkc.org, 206-263-9110

Michelle Valdez, michelle.valdez@cehkc.org, 206-263-1350

Visit our website to learn more about the Family Homelessness Initiative or to locate any of the documents referenced in this email at www.kingcounty.gov/familyhomelessness.

For more information on the Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) or to see the most recent monthly newsletter, go to the website at www.cehkc.org